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giving
thanks

Family finds safe haven in Ames



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.....
Amy Clark RD, LD



Facets

Fac•et - n. 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.
2. The particular angle from which something is considered

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ON THE COVER

Prezella Anderson, back right, and her daughters, Jaquita, back left, Christina, front left, and Akeema, front right, moved to Ames in the fall of 2009. By Nirmalendu Majumdar.



DEBRA ATKINSON, M.S., C.S.C.S., graduated from Iowa State, where she's also taught in the department of kinesiology for 12 years. She has been a fitness professional, writing, speaking and practicing for 25 years.



PEGGY BEST is an administrative specialist for the Center for Crops Utilization Research and the BioCentury Research Farm at Iowa State University. She is married and resides in Ames.



CLARE BILLS is a writer, speaker and artist living in Ames. She has a master's degree in journalism and is also a graduate of the Institute for Children's Literature. She now writes for magazines and websites.



JENN BOCCELLA is a senior at Iowa State University majoring in communication studies/journalism. She is involved with the campus ministry The Salt Company and enjoys quality time with family and friends.



DEBORAH BUNKA is a freelance writer, graphic designer and jewelry maker. Her interests include politics, literature and geology. She lives with her husband and two children.



AMY CLARK received a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University with an emphasis in dietetics. She is certified in adult weight management. Her goal at Hy-Vee is to increase awareness.



MOLLY CLARK is an Iowa State University student majoring in journalism visual communications. She is from Atlantic. Molly also works part time as a street vendor in Ames.



KATHY L. P. COOK, M.D., is a Board Certified Dermatologist. She works at Skin Solutions Dermatology in Ames.



JOSHUA DUCHENE is a licensed cosmetologist who works at a salon in Ames.



ROSE E. MORGART ELSBECKER is an educator, freelance writer and musician who lives in Marshalltown. She received her bachelor's degree in education from the University of Northern Iowa.



KATHY HANSON is the education reporter for The Tribune. The job suits her because she's insatiably curious. She lives in Ames with her husband and the youngest of their six children.



ELAINE LENZ is a freelance writer. She is married and lives in Clive.



KAREN PETERSEN graduated from Iowa State University in family resource management. She is a Certified Financial Planner, has three grandchildren and can be found on Ada Hayden Lake kayaking.

Things to be grateful for after the flood

By CLARE BILLS

Keeping a gratitude journal is all the rage these days.

Guests

on Oprah credit their journals with their latest good fortunes.

But the idea of being grateful is nothing new and has deep

spiritual roots. Biblical verses have reinforced the benefits of thankfulness in many places:

1 Thessalonians 5:18 "Give thanks in all circumstances give thanks, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." Jesus set an example of thankfulness, especially at the last supper when he gave thanks before breaking bread with the disciples (Matthew 26:27) and before he prayed over Lazarus.



CLARE BILLS



Clare Bills' family room was damaged by floodwaters.

By Clare Bills/Facets

(John 11:41). The Old Testament and the Psalms are also full of exhortations to give thanks, such as: "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love endures forever." (106: 1 and 107: 1)*

We are encouraged to give thanks for all things, but it's difficult to understand how we can be grateful when we experience pain or loss. The night of Sunday, Aug. 8, is one such night for me. Our three grown children and their families had all been home for the weekend. All but one son, Isaac, left Sunday to return to their homes. He and I stayed up until midnight, waiting to hear if his family had landed safely in Florida after heavy Iowa rains delayed their flight. When we knew they were safe, Isaac headed downstairs to our guest room, but bounded back upstairs with the disturbing news that the entire lower level was covered with water. We bailed water for hours.

Two days later, the second wave of flooding hit, and this time we also lost electric power and later water. Over the next few days, we tore out carpet, pried off baseboards, cut out drywall, pulled out soggy insulation and basically emptied the lower level into the upstairs and the garage.

When we thought we were safe, we scheduled a handyman to reinstall drywall, and my husband and I left town for a much-needed break. Two days into our break, we were summoned home by a neighbor with news that our basement had flooded again and the new drywall was now wet.

The recovery from the floods of

2010 has been long and painful for us and for thousands. But in the midst of all of the anguish, hard work and confusion, I'm deeply grateful. Why? There are many reasons. Here are a few of them:

• **THE TIMING.** If the floods had come one day sooner, the situation would have been far more complex with 12 people in the house, four of them children. Having one son here was an enormous help, and when he left a few days later, our other son, Jake, came back to help.

• **EXTENDED FAMILY.** Two sisters drove from Minneapolis to help and stayed in a hotel at their expense. Weeks later, one sister returned with her husband for another weekend of hard work.

• **AMAZING FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.** Those who flooded and even those who didn't checked in almost daily. Neighbors exchanged helpful information as we all worked to recover, and one neighbor checked our home while we were gone in the midst of torrential rains. Other friends helped us paint and clean when we were finally ready to rebuild.

• **HONEST CONTRACTORS.** When we called our drywall installer in the midst of the third flood to make sure his materials were OK, he and his wife went to our home and worked for hours to vacuum the water and set up fans to prevent further damage.

I'm thankful to live among people who are generous and trustworthy. Yes, this has been a difficult experience, and we have a long way to go before our home is back to normal, but I feel blessed when I stand back and look at the experience and see not just the silver linings, but all the clouds that were erased by people shining love on us.

As for me, I will never again hear the words "flood" without a deep and profound understanding of what others are living through.

* New International Version of the Bible was used for scripture passages.

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THANKS FOR SPANX

... and other simple things in life

By JENN BOCCELLA

The fall season is fast approaching. With it comes cooler temperatures, trees bursting with color, and before too long, plates full of pumpkin pie and turkey. Typically, this is also a season to reflect on the things we are most grateful for.

On Thanksgiving Day, many families take a moment to acknowledge what they are most appreciative of. Often, the big things in life are noted: our family and friends. Now, those special people in our lives are reason enough to have a heart of gratitude, but what about all of the "small" things? Those people or objects that are taken for granted, yet impact our day-to-day lives?

Quite honestly, fall should not be the only season we find ourselves feeling grateful. Instead, it is a consistent attitude to adopt year round. Here are 10 simple things to convince you life is worth living with a thankful heart.



JENN BOCCELLA

3

DISHWASHERS. If there is one thing every man, woman and child should be thankful for, it is the dishwasher. Chores have now become nothing more than pushing a button that reads "Wash Cycle." It can't get more uncomplicated than that.



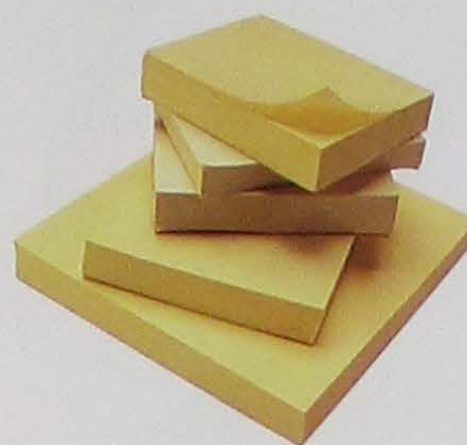
4 **SMS.** The phone beeps to reveal a text message from your son who is away at college. It reads, "Hi, Mom!" A little thing called text messaging has become a great way to connect and touch base with the people we love in a matter of seconds.

5 **SIPPY CUPS.** Granted, toddlers mostly use this utensil; however, the spill-free lid has saved numerous moms, dads and babysitters from having to clean up in aisle two. An ingenious gadget worth acknowledging.



YOUTUBE. Laughter truly is the best medicine. And after a long, stressful day, there's nothing like pulling up YouTube and finding the latest video for a good laugh. Whether it's "David at the Dentist," "Jessica's Daily Affirmation," or "Charlie Bit Me," YouTube dares you to crack a smile.

1 **POST-IT NOTES.** How many times have you jotted down an idea, a quick list of to-dos or a phone number that needs to be remembered on one of those little, yellow, sticky squares? Without those small, yet extremely useful pieces of paper we would be lost and confused!



2 **CART PUSHERS.** These are the men and women who haul all of the shopping carts from the parking lot back into the store. Now, let's get real; that job cannot be terribly fun. It never ends, carts get left all over the parking lot and can be hard to push, and it has to be completed rain or shine — all in order that there is something to place our items in, making the shopping experience faster and easier. Whew! Thank you, cart pushers.

7 **SPANX.** It doesn't matter how old you are or who you are, Spanx may be the best clothing invention for the human body. The way things get sucked in, tucked away and hidden is undeniably wonderful. While it may create a false sense of reality, it sure makes you feel good.

8 **REARVIEW MIRRORS.** Convincing your child that you have eyes in the back of your head has been possible thanks to rearview mirrors. Not only does it allow you to catch a child's every move, but makes last minute make-up application or hair touch-ups achievable.

COFFEE SLEEVES. As you race to catch up with life as it speeds ahead, caffeine becomes more of a need rather than a want. Because of coffee sleeves, hot coffee cups can be taken on the go. Coffee stays warmer longer and you won't lose a hand due to holding a scalding cup of Joe.

10 **A MOMENT ALONE.** We live in a world in which we are connected to something or someone almost all of the time. Whether it's a Blackberry, Bluetooth or some other technology trinket, finding a moment of solitude is difficult. Take advantage of the drive home and all of the red lights you hit; it's a moment you get to call yours.

No matter the time of year, this is only the beginning of a long list of items, people and moments to be grateful for. Sometimes it is a matter of stepping back and seeing the big picture. Pretty quickly you will find life consists of extended but simple reasons to say thanks.

giving thanks | **ANDERSON FAMILY**



By Nirmalendu Majumdar/Facets

Prezella Anderson, right, and her daughters, from left, Akeema, 14; Christina, 10; and Jaquita, 13, moved to Ames in the fall of 2009.

Too many blessings to count

Family finds safe haven, new beginning in Ames

Gary, Ind. is about 380 miles from Ames. But that distance can't measure how far Prezella Anderson's life has come since she moved to Ames from Gary, via a short detour in Dallas, Texas, a year ago.

Anderson, a single mother with three school-aged daughters, left Gary in 2008 looking for a haven to recover from a string of losses, believing she was led by God to start a new life in Dallas.

In 2004, Anderson's 23-year old son, Corey Fields, died of natural causes. Two days later, a divorce decree became final ending Anderson's marriage.

It was hard to leave her two grown children in Gary, a daughter, Shaumanika Scires, and a son, Cody Fields, Anderson says. She was also hesitant to cut ties with her pastor, Bishop Alvin Carter, of Prayer Outreach Deliverance Church, but her daughters were struggling in school, and the leading from God felt very strong, she says.

Anderson soon realized urban life in Dallas offered little improvement over Gary's inner city environment.

"My girls just didn't feel safe in Dallas," she says, "and they sort of felt lost in the school system."

When a friend in Dallas pointed her toward Ames, she figured God was just leading her one step at a time.

"My friend Vivian Hampton was my prayer partner," Anderson says. "She told me Ames is a beautiful place to live and raise children and they have good schools."

In the fall of 2009, Anderson and her daughters arrived in Ames and began to settle in.

Christina Anderson, 10, a student at Sawyer Elementary School, became an "honor student." Her older sisters, Jaquita Anderson, 13, and Akeema Anderson, 14, learned to navigate Ames Middle School, make sense of subjects such as math for the first time, and discover strategies to resolve disputes without fighting.

Anderson began making new friends in a group called Beyond Welfare, where people from all walks of life practice principles of friendship and reciprocity.

She got a job at the Salvation Army, and was thankful it was on a CyRide route, since she didn't have a car.

In December 2009, Anderson's cell phone rang just as she was boarding a bus after finishing her shift at work.

Already exhausted and chilled, Anderson heard Scires say, "Mom, your son has passed."

The words sent her into shock.

"I didn't know whether to scream or roll out on the ground," she says.

Cody Fields, 25, had been sitting in a parked car when a drive-by shooter opened fire with an automatic rifle. Paramedics rushed Fields to the hospital where he died the next morning.

In the weeks that followed, Anderson says she experienced the limitless generosity of people in Ames. The outpouring of love and support kept Fields' death from becoming a setback, she says.

Teachers and administrators from Sawyer and Ames Middle School "came out of the woodwork to bless us when they learned of the loss," Anderson says. "The school district even provided my children with Christmas presents."

When the unexpected travel and funeral expenses put Anderson behind on her rent, her landlord showed leniency, and her Beyond Welfare friends rushed in to help.

"My landlord told me not to worry," she says. "She let me pay the rent back a little bit each month. I just paid it off this month."

"My B.W. friends had already helped me find a job, get a car and a computer, and furnish my apartment," she says. "When Cody died, people like Mary Rose Anderson and Jan Cook brought me meals and spent time with me so I wouldn't be so alone in my grief."

Ten months since Cody Fields' death, Anderson and her daughters say they have too many blessings to count. Anderson is working at Mainstream Living and the girls are excelling at school.

Jaquita says, "I can hang out with my friends outside and feel safe."

"It's so quiet here," Christina said, "I can concentrate. Now math is my favorite subject."

Akeema says, "I learned to control my emotions because the atmosphere is so different here."

Anderson says she has a list of people she's thankful for, but she wants God to get all the credit for guiding her to Ames and putting people in her life to bless her.

"David Sahr, Okela Barnett, Roxanne Steele, Arlisa Rucher and Jeanne Randall are some of them," she says. "If I left someone out, you know who you are."

Anderson says, "The most important thing is to put God first, and he will bless you."

Are you confident or confused?



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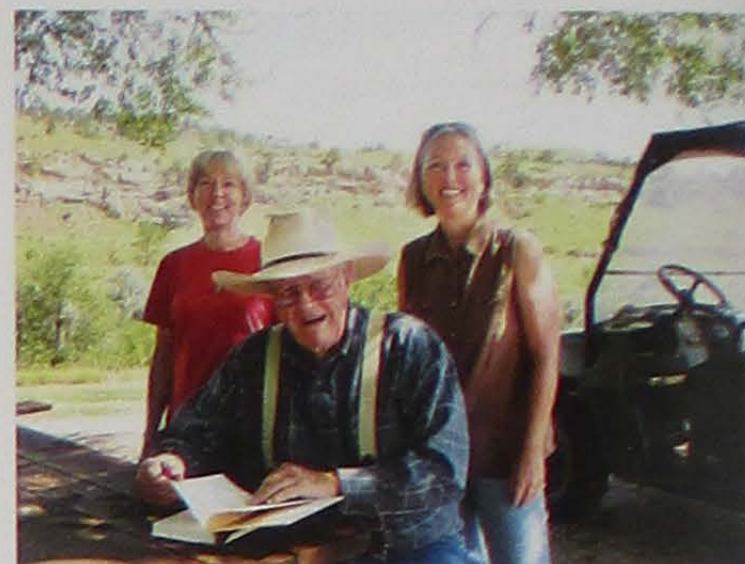
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Contributed photos

Above: Connie Hall and Peggy Best spend time with Dayton O. Hyde, founder of the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary. Left: One of the many beautiful and healthy wild horses at the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary.

Thankful for people with passion

By **PEGGY BEST**

It is very easy for me to think of things I can do to help make this world a better place, but the problem is I often only think about these things and fail to take any action. That is why I am so thankful for the people that really stand up and take charge and make an impact in this world. I recently met a man who is living an amazing and incredible life and has made changes in this world that only a small percent of us will ever know about.



PEGGY BEST

This man, Dayton O. Hyde, had a dream of saving wild mustangs that were destined for slaughter by the Bureau of Land Management. More than 20 years ago, and with \$15 in his pocket, he was introduced to some land outside of Hot Springs, S.D. He said, "This place will be a fine home for wild horses," and the rest is history. Today, he owns more than 11,000 acres with another 2,000 acres leased from the Sioux Indians. More than 500 head of the most beautiful wild horses run wild and free. A few months ago, Hyde

turned 85 years old and is still working hard every day to make an impact to save wild horses. Hyde founded IRAM (Institute of Range and Mustangs), a nonprofit organization that survives mainly from donations and sponsorships.

Hyde is an amazing person and a true conservationist. He has written several books about his experiences in ranching and working with wild horses. I have read one of his books and look forward to reading all of them. The first book I read, "Don Coyote," had me laughing and crying at the same time and was just a fantastic book. I can't wait to read about more of his experiences.

He also used to be a rodeo clown and rodeo photographer, working with the likes of Slim Pickens. His sanctuary is also the film site of the movies "Hidalgo" and "Crazy Horse." If you visit the sanctuary and are lucky enough for the opportunity to sit down and talk to him, you will be spellbound from the start. Hyde has had so many unique experiences, and he can also spin a tall tale once in awhile, too, but you can never really be sure when he is pulling your leg.

The sanctuary offers tours of the ranch, which was an amazing experience. My sister,

Connie, took me to the sanctuary this past summer. She is involved with the sponsorship at the sanctuary. We took the public two-hour tour one day, and the next we had a private tour with the director, Susan Watt, which lasted from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. It was absolutely amazing. You can tell Hyde and Watt, along with all of the volunteers who work at the ranch, have an absolute passion for helping these horses. Whenever you have some time to browse around their website, I guarantee you will really enjoy it. It may even inspire you to visit the sanctuary. The website is www.gwtc.net/~iram/.

What wonderful people they are. I am so thankful that every once in awhile you get an opportunity to meet people who really care about the land, people and animals, and feel that all should be treated well. I am thankful for these people who are selfless and do whatever they can do to make this world a better place. Pick up a copy of "Don Coyote" or another of Hyde's books or rent the movie "Hidalgo," which will take you to a place in your heart and raise a new compassion and thankfulness for the kind of people that give of themselves in ways we could never imagine.

giving thanks | CHOOSING GRATITUDE

Planting the seeds of gratitude

By ROSE E. ELSBECKER

If you stop and think about it, everything begins with a seed. Look around and you may see a tiny shoot struggling toward the light, a budding flower or a mighty oak. You may also see a child running and laughing, face turned toward the sun, dancing as a kite dances along with the breeze.



ROSE
ELSBECKER

Every spark of life that you see began with a tiny seed, coaxed to grow to its fullest through light, nurture and warmth, with love and thankfulness, despite the rain, the cold, the storms and the droughts of life.

Each new day is a gift. Along with each new day, we are given the choice to begin the day with an "attitude of gratitude," with thankfulness, or with negativity and bitterness. What is the advantage of choosing gratitude? Let me introduce you to what one of our local women, Barb Gazaway has to say.

"When I begin the day with gratitude, it makes a big difference in my day," Gazaway says. "The day goes more smoothly, and without it, begins to unravel. It makes a difference when you begin your day with a thank-you. It helps you to look for little things during the day to be grateful for."

Gazaway is someone who has experienced many of the same everyday struggles that some of our readers face, such as balancing a career and motherhood, caring for an aging parent, finding time for church ministry and volunteer work while seeking to find time for herself, to nurture her inner self, and to maintain a healthy perspective along with an active lifestyle.

You can all relate to today's pressure to live up to the "superwoman" image. It isn't easy to maintain a positive perspective throughout life's storms, or even the daily struggles, but it is possible to look for little things to be thankful for, to begin to plant seeds in your garden of gratitude, and to watch that garden begin to blossom and to grow.

Tom Bower, a retired pastor who loves to work outdoors, substitute teach and spend quality time with his wife and crew of lively grandkids, says, "An attitude of gratitude lends to a more buoyant perspective in life, makes life more interesting and more fun, if you will."

Bower goes on to say that it has been impressed upon him that we have the power of choice, and that we can choose gratitude over a negative outlook, to our own benefit,



Contributed photo

Barb Gazaway, of Marshalltown, holds her granddaughter, Eva Claire, 2.

and to the benefit of those around us. He firmly believes in the principal that positives attract positives and what you sow you shall reap. If you sow seeds of gratitude, you begin to focus on the positive and to attract more positives in your life. If you sow negative seeds, you actually focus on the things that you don't want to happen, and attract negatives.

Research shows that we can help to build a brighter future for ourselves by choosing an "attitude of gratitude." We have the power to take a tough situation, and to see the positives that can come of it. In so doing, we open channels within, rivers of purer waters, where new life can begin to flow as opposed to creating a muddied up stream that literally chokes off the growth of new life. Research also shows that positive people are more productive. They work to pursue their goals and dreams and to nurture their talents to the fullest.

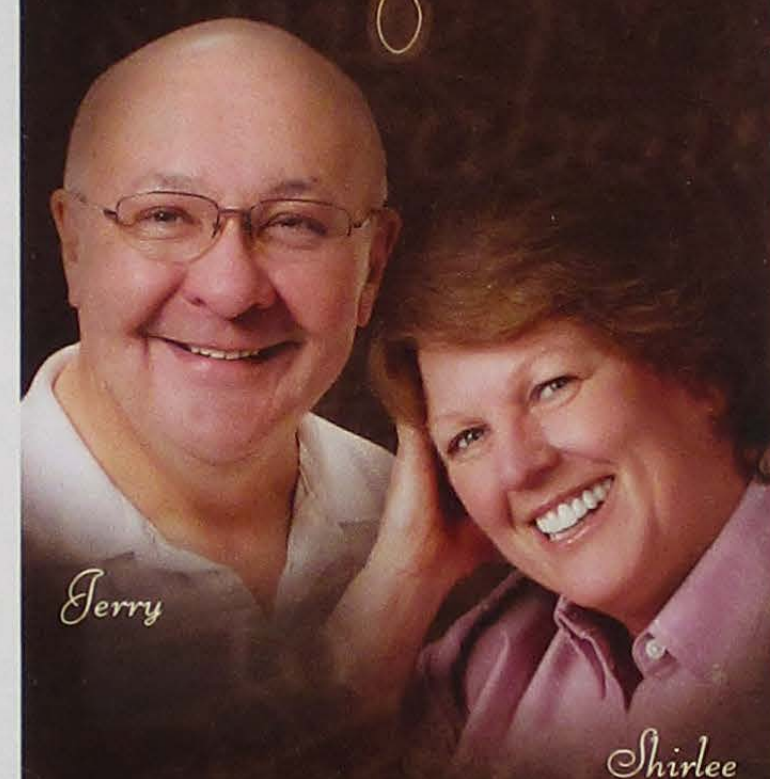
Ralph Waldo Emerson lends to us a unique perspective on this issue. "What lies before us and what lies behind us, is not as important to what lies within us." In other words, be it in times of joy or in sorrow; we have the ability to reach deep down within us and to discover seeds of gratitude. When we take the time to plant those seeds and to scatter them along the pathways of life, we begin to see new greenery sprouting up, new life emerging, and we begin to nurture a more positive outlook on life. In so doing, we attract others with the same outlook, and together we have the power to uphold one another along life's journey.

Let us take a moment to think of someone who has made a positive impact on our lives, and to then take another moment to pick up the phone or to send them a note to say, "Thank you for being you." What a difference planting that one little seed of gratitude can make in someone else's day. Try it. You may just turn someone's day around. You may be planting seeds of greatness.

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LENDING A HELPING HAND

Ames woman follows Peace Corps dream to Armenia

Joy Nash has always had a desire to help people. After graduating from Iowa State University in 2008, she took action and applied to join the Peace Corps in November 2009 and is now serving a two-year term in the Central Asian country of Armenia.

Started in 1960 by President John F. Kennedy, the Peace Corps has sent volunteers to various developing countries to live and work to improve them. Since it began, more than 200,000 volunteers have served in 139 countries working on issues that range from AIDS education to teaching English to environmental awareness.

"All over the world people are hurting and struggling and in need of a helping hand. If my hand is free, then why wouldn't I lend it out?" Nash says. "We all want to be happy and successful, but in my opinion, it is impossible for anyone to be truly happy and successful if others are not. Nobody wins when everybody is losing."

Nash described the application process for the Peace Corps as long and intense. On average, the process takes 6 to 12 months.

"The first interview is important, because if your interviewer doesn't think you have what it takes, then your application is denied, and you do not go on to the next step. I remember I was very nervous. I had a toy in my hand throughout the interview that was given to me from one of my clients that I worked with through ChildServe. For me, Peace Corps has always been my dream and exactly what I wanted to do with my life. My recruiter called me within a couple of weeks and told me he was approving for me to go on in the process," Nash says.

Two things that she was worried about during the application process were the facts that she is



Contributed photo

Joy Nash, center, teaches a class about the environment at a children's camp in Armenia, where she is stationed with the Peace Corps.

openly a lesbian and a Christian. She was told that she may be placed in an area where she did not have any other Christians around for support, which was a hard thing for her to deal with.

"I got a call a month or so after my first interview from another member of the Peace Corps staff who asked me about my lesbian identity. She asked if I would be willing to go back into the closet if the Peace Corps asked because I could be placed somewhere that it would be unsafe to be an out lesbian," Nash says.

This request was difficult for her, because she is proud of being who she is and came out as a lesbian when she was 18, about 8 years ago. However, she decided that the sacrifice would be worth it to accomplish the noble work that she hoped to do in the Peace Corps.

A couple of weeks later, in April, Nash was approved and received her invitation to join the Peace Corps in the mail. The invitation told her where and when she would be going and a general description of the kind of

"All over the world people are hurting and struggling and in need of a helping hand. If my hand is free, then why wouldn't I lend it out?"

— Joy Nash

work she would be doing. She was given 10 days to review this information and to either accept or decline the offer. Nash accepted her position as an environmental educator in Armenia the very next day and says that she has not regretted her decision since.

Nash did have some doubts about joining in the beginning. She was nervous about leaving

behind her friends, her family and the way of life that she has become accustomed to in Ames. She asked all of the important people in her life not to judge her too harshly if she came back because she couldn't handle it.

"I've had many times of doubts since then, but there are always many positive and wonderful things that remind me of where I am and why I want to be here. I think back to why I applied in the first place and remember that the most important thing is that I help others to the best of my ability," Nash says.

Daily life in Armenia is very different from her life in America. She says the thing she misses most about America is the diversity, as 97.9 percent of the people in the country are Armenian.

"It's very different interacting with people on a daily basis who not only speak different language but also has a very different culture," she says. "Armenia has not had women's movements, civil rights movements, LGBT equality movements, environmental movements, etc. And this is evident in our day-to-day lives."

However, she feels as though all the sacrifices she has made in her life have been worth it. She is pursuing her lifelong dream, and taking action for something that she believes in wholeheartedly.

"From this experience, I hope to make a difference in the lives of others. I hope to be better equipped to continue in my life mission to making the world a better place. I hope that this cross-cultural experience leaves me with a love for the Armenian people and that I come back as an advocate for them."

Nash is currently stationed in Stepanavan, Armenia. Her term of service is from May 27, 2010, to Aug. 14, 2012. She says she loves it there so much that she is considering staying there a third year after her term is over.

Tips for quick and easy holiday decorating

By **ELAINE LENZ**

The holidays are almost here, and it's time to make the house look warm and inviting with just a touch of whimsy. Growing up, my childhood home was always decked out, and those decorations still make the holidays seem a bit more exciting to this day. It's great to have a home full of decorations, but there are few who have a lot of time or money to spend on decorations. Here are some tips and ideas to make this season less stressful and messy and more exciting and beautiful.



ELAINE LENZ

DRESS THE HOME FOR BOTH SEASONS

Take time to search out décor, greens and table dressings that will work for both November and December. This will cut down on expense and time and will also make everything more cohesive. Try holiday wreaths that have deep greens, reds, browns and gold for beautiful door décor that doesn't need to be replaced after Thanksgiving.

FIND GREAT GREENS

To instantly warm up a room, beautifully placed garlands, wreaths and even mistletoe can work wonders. Nice, luscious garland draped down banisters can add some splendor with minimal work. Most craft stores will have various kinds of faux garland that can be personalized at home. Add sprigs of faux berries to mix up deep green strands.

LUXURIOUS LINENS

The right table dressing can make a room look just a touch more "done." Luxurious doesn't always mean expensive. As long as it matches the room and is made of a soft material, it will add to a room. Table runners are an easy, simple way to add to any table. Solid colored runners topped with a beautiful center piece can add elegance and charm without needing to be changed after each meal.

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Clusters of scented candles in simple glass candle holders are a perfect way to spice up an empty table or mantle. No need to light them at all times; most will add a waft of scent just sitting out. Tiny votives in holders can also be scattered around centerpieces to add a touch of elegance. Large

candles in tall hurricane glasses are also a versatile decoration. The holidays are always a great time to pick out a new favorite scent or an old favorite. Scents such as pumpkin, cranberry and pine are always a hit around this time. Just be sure to be safe when lighting all candles.

FRAMED FAMILY PHOTOS

A great way to make holiday decorating easy, fun and economical is to frame your favorite holiday memories and place them around the home. Fun holiday frames can be found at local shops or can even be a great family craft project. Clusters of different sizes and shapes of framed memories can look nice on any surface, or they can take the place of your regular wall photos. The best part is that this can be changed and updated to fit each year and each family.

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Riding the roller coaster of life

By KAREN PETERSEN

"You know life is like a roller coaster. We all get on at the same place, and we all get off at the same place. We do get to choose how we ride."

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This is the first in a series about life choices local women make as they "move on" through the roller coaster ride we call life.

Just the facts:

Name: Brenda Schwager, owner of JB Knacker in Gilbert

Age: 43

Education: Bachelor of science in nursing from the University of Iowa

Family: Husband, Neil, a data analyst at Wells Fargo, and six children ranging in age from two to 21.



KAREN PETERSEN

Brenda's ride

Early in our marriage, before children, we decided to try our best to have one of us home with our children. In my first one-parent-at-home position, I was a weekend pediatric nurse at Mary Greeley. As many who have worked nights and weekends know, this is a tough long-term schedule.

Not working was not an option; we needed extra income to make ends meet.

My second position, and my first attempt at my own business, was in direct sales with Mary Kay. I learned about marketing (marketing was way outside my comfort zone) and basic sales stuff. And for not being a "girly girl," I was not bad at sales; I even earned one of those red cars.

During this time, I began to dream and plan my perfect job. My good friend, Julie Adams, and I would talk about our passion of having our own little shop that sold "this and that" and allowed us to be home with our children.

In 2001, we began to have occasional sales. With my love of old stuff (my mom, Evelyn Thielen, introduced me to everything antique) and Julie's ability to stage the pieces and decorate, we made a great team. At each sale, we had crowds flooding in at starting time and buying with a frenzy.

This success created the itch to open a real bricks and mortar shop.

Now, looking back over the last five years, I am glad I opened JB Knacker. Sometimes I work all night getting ready for an event. I don't mind the long hours because, unlike the night hours of nursing, I am working on my creation; I enjoy seeing the finished product, talking with my customer and keeping up on the new trends.

Finding my "stuff"; exploring the Midwest

for treasures with my husband and kids is definitely the most fun.

I like to tell the story of the time Neil and I were trying to help our son understand the merits of reading and bragging a little about how well we did in college because of our reading skills. With a sly smile our son said, "If you guys are so smart, then why aren't we rich?" We laughed because he actually put us on the spot and muttered something about being rich in the ways that matter most.

My husband, Neil, is my best supporter and lifter/hauler/scrapper/painter; I couldn't do this job without him. My children are my inspiration. I want them to see me work hard, fail occasionally and be proud, yet humble, when I succeed.

Brenda sums up her choice to be an independent business owner. "The choices we made in our careers certainly affect our income, and we are content with our choices ... being a stay-at-home mom and building a small business is a great life."

Lessons from Brenda

- Education is a wonderful thing.
- Your degree need not limit your career choices.
- Help yourself get out of your comfort zone.
- Tip-toe into your dream career.
- Part time is a good way to start.
- Follow your passion.

Because life is ... more than money

Do you have a story of life's roller coaster ride? I would like to tell it. Please contact me with your ideas.

Karen L. Petersen CFP® CDA™ is a fee-based financial advisor. You can contact her at (515) 232-2785 or at karen@mymorethanmoney.net.

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Fitness professionals share the reasons they are thankful

By DEBRA ATKINSON

We in the fitness industry are constantly reminded of how lucky we are to work

in an environment where people are always in a better mood when they leave than when they come in. Even for those who find exercise is a chore and something they simply do because they know they need to, they feel better when they are done in spite of themselves. Endorphins are just like that, friends who show up whether they're invited or not.

Over the course of a career, fitness professionals are reminded how fortunate they are, how small everyday so-called issues are and what true gratitude and human spirit look like. Below are a few examples shared by fitness instructors and trainers who are grateful for the people who have come through their lives and the richness that those experiences provide.

- "I've worked with clients with Parkinson's for the past 10 years. In every instance, they've been some of the most joyful and appreciative of life people I've met. The ability of a person who has every reason to complain but instead chooses to make the most of every day, and to use humor, warmth, as well as empathy for others in much heavier doses than they use thoughts of self is inspiring. I'm better because of them."

- "After three months of exercise, a woman in her 60s who presented with weak and underdeveloped muscles and had been diagnosed with osteoporosis is now 'buff!' She worked hard, followed the programs and exercises assigned to her and is so much stronger, but equally important, more confident as a result."

- "A very deconditioned woman in her 50s who had undergone a brain surgery that left her feeling extremely tired and 'old' beyond her biological age, began working with me six weeks ago. A benchmark for her is an annual shopping trip, and this year she happily reports she was not tired and her legs and feet were not



DEBRA ATKINSON



Photo by Goodshot

sore at the end of the day."

- "A woman in her late 60s has had it all ... cancer, heart attack, brain surgery, you name it. Yet, she has the most positive, fun, humorous attitude of anyone you'll meet. Truly she is an inspiration in perseverance and attitude. She's an avid traveler and able to continue doing so through her work inside and outside of the fitness facilities."

- "Teaching a Pilates class, the sweetest woman attended week after week with her head covered in a scarf. As strong and fit as she appeared at first, from time to time she took breaks and occasionally had to sit out an entire set. She never complained when she was having a tough day or struggling to get through her own battles, and she always had a warm greeting for others. She would be the first to say thank you at the conclusion of class. There's something so open and vulnerable about someone going through cancer treatment. She now inspires others to find their own edge on the yoga mat and can relate her own journey."

- "A group fitness instructor missed teaching during her chemotherapy for breast cancer and was so full of energy and life upon her return that it put apparently healthy participants to shame. She was so happy to be there and sharing a healthy part of herself with others. Focusing on giving was her mantra; she will say that giving to others makes every day better."

There are hundreds if not thousands more stories like this within every trainer's memory. The rich tapestry of relationship together with getting stronger or better and more confident by crossing boundaries, finish lines or crushing barriers that used to be there are priceless gifts for which fitness professionals are fortunate to be recipients of every day. We're thankful for the reminders. Remember that you are inspiring someone today, too.

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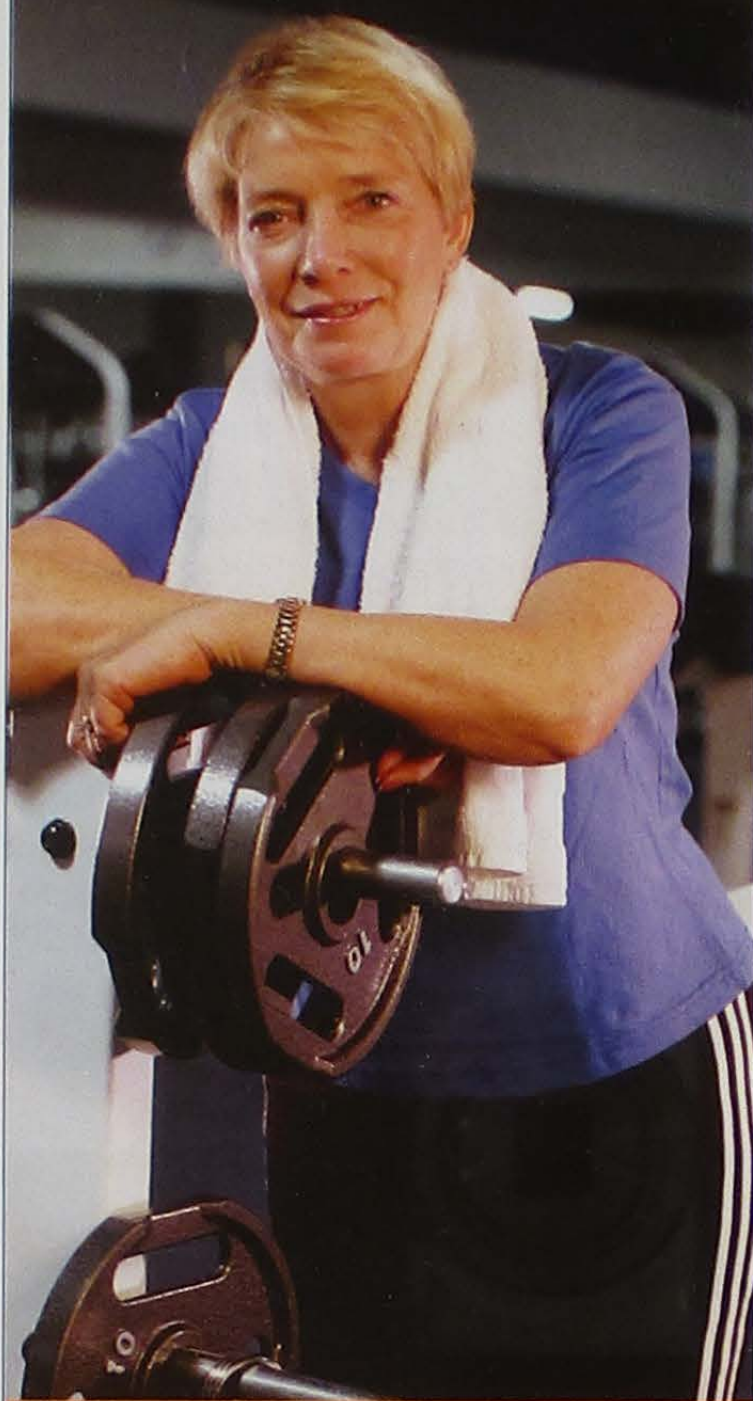


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Leave-in conditioners can help enhance your hair's health.

Q How can I make my hair healthier and less brittle?

A First of all, I want to tell you a little about hair. For the most part, hair is mainly a protein called Keratin, which is also found in our fingernails. The part of the hair that is visible to us is called the shaft, and it is basically just dead tissue. Our hair has three layers: the outer layer, the cortex and the medulla. The outer layer consists of protein, the cortex is where the hair's pigment is, which gives hair its natural color, and the medulla is where the Keratin cells reside.

This explains why hair is highly affected by our overall health. Hair grows about one half inch a month, and a single strand can live for up to seven years. Hair also grows faster in the summer and when you sleep. It grows the most between ages 16 and 24 and 40 to 50.

Regular exercise and good grooming will help keep your hair healthy. Another thing that might not be popular with many is to slow down on tea and coffee intake. They take away minerals and proteins that are very important for your hair. Alcohol should only be used in moderation, and medication can also affect your hair's growth and healthiness. Just remember that anything you put into

your body, stress or poor grooming can effect how healthy your hair is.

Last but not least, deep conditioners, leave-in conditioners and a Keratin treatment can all help enhance your hair's health, so make sure to consult with your stylist next time you're in the chair.



JOSHUA DUCHENE

Q How will menopause affect my hair growth and condition?

A During menopause, it is not uncommon for women to experience hair loss or thinning. This is caused by a hormone imbalance, which also takes place during pregnancy. Most of the time, the thinning of hair will be temporary. However, emotional and physical stress, illness and medication could be to blame, or the hair loss could just be hereditary. Thinning will normally end after menopause when your hormones settle down. You might even be surprised to see your hair grow back thicker than it was before menopause.

Here are some ways to manage your hair while going through menopause. Layers always seem to add volume, so try going with a short-layered style to give you a look of a full head of hair. Consider blow-drying your hair in the opposite direction of the way your hair naturally lays. After the hair is dry, place the hair back the way it naturally goes, which makes the hair look thicker. Since we're going for volume in the hair, it might be smart to pick up a volumizing shampoo and conditioner as well as volumizing products, which can be found at your salon or local convenience store.

How to keep your nails in tip-top shape

By KATHY L.P. COOK, M.D.

Dermatologists are the experts in skin, hair and nails. It is estimated that up to 10 percent of visits to a dermatologist concern nail changes or problems.

Nails perform many functions, which include adding to our dexterity, such as the ability to pick up small objects, protecting the underlying bone, giving clues about underlying skin disease and internal health or disease, and scratching an itch. Nails also have a cosmetic function of adornment, which has been around for thousands of years. Fingernails grow faster than toenails, and nails grow faster in men than in women. A fingernail will grow about one-eighth of an inch a month and toenails grow one-tenth of an inch a month. Nails grow faster in the summer than in the winter, and growth is affected by disease, diet, medications, trauma, chronic illness, fever and the aging process. As we age, our nails will often show an increase in ridging that is normal. Nail problems do increase as we age.



KATHY COOK

SOME COMMON PROBLEMS WITH NAILS INCLUDE:

- White spots on the nails. This is usually the result of trauma (hitting the nail) and will grow out as the nail grows. A superficial type of fungus can appear as chalky white spots that flake and don't grow out.
- Splinter hemorrhages are vertical lines that look like a splinter and can also be from trauma or certain drugs and diseases.
- Ingrown nails are more common on the feet and are often caused by trimming the nails too short or tight fitting shoes among other less common causes. Ingrown nails can lead to bacterial infections and can be painful. Treating an ingrown nail often requires a trip to the doctor to remove the nail spike that is digging into the skin around the nail and treating any accompanying infection.
- Fungal or bacterial infections can occur from trauma, poor skin hygiene, nail biting and finger sucking or frequent exposure to

water or chemicals. Fungal infections are very common, especially on the toenails. Treatment requires the correct diagnosis and usually oral antifungals. There have been recent advertisements for laser treatment of nail fungus. A laser called Noveon uses near infrared light to kill fungus. Longer-term follow-up would be helpful to know how successful this will be. It is not covered by insurance.

Dark spots or streaks in the nails may indicate an underlying mole, and melanoma can occur in the nail bed and appears as a dark streak that can change over time. These melanomas are rare, but need to be recognized and diagnosed earlier for a better cure rate.

Clues to internal health can be gathered from the appearance of the nails. For instance, white nails may indicate liver disease, half and half nails (half white and half pink) can be seen in kidney disease. Lung disease may show up as yellowed and thickened nails. With heart disease, the nail bed may be redder, and anemia can cause a paler nail bed. Skin disease can also be diagnosed based on nail changes, such as pits in psoriasis, and sometimes with a type of hair loss called alopecia areata.

Splinter hemorrhages may be seen in infections, heart disease and vascular inflammation. Many other changes in the nails indicate disease states too numerous to mention.

KEEP YOUR NAILS HEALTHY WITH THE FOLLOWING TIPS:

- Keep nails clean and dry to prevent bacteria from collecting under the nail.
 - Cut nails straight across and rounded slightly in the center.
 - Wear proper-fitting shoes and alternate shoes on a regular basis.
 - Do not try to self-treat ingrown toenails, especially if they are infected.
 - Use an anti-fungal foot powder daily.
 - Do not bite your fingernails. You can transfer infectious organisms between your fingers and mouth. Also, nail biting can damage the skin around your fingers allowing bacteria to enter.
 - Report any nail problems to your dermatologist.
- Nails changes can be complex and are best evaluated by an expert.
- In a future article, I will discuss nail adornment and nail salon safety.



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Gratitude on the holiday menu

By **DEBORAH BUNKA**

Let me admit it right up front: Thanksgiving has never been one of my favorite days.

I'm not crazy about turkey, marshmallow yams or pies in general. Football bores me and so do relatives who visit and stay too long. In fact, if I had to make a list of my favorite holidays, Thanksgiving wouldn't even rate in the top five.



DEBORAH BUNKA

However, before you think me a total curmudgeon, I have to add that there are a couple of aspects of this holiday I do find appealing.

Anytime people get together to prepare a shared meal is a day to celebrate. The kitchen is the heart of the home where all sorts of humor is shared, generational wisdom imparted and family recipes swapped. Cooking with others is a great way to bond. Helping out can also lessen the stress surrounding these occasions, especially for the host. Regardless of what ends up on the table that day, the satisfaction in having gotten it there hot, tasty and eagerly welcomed is its own reward.

Likewise, taking the time to count your blessings and express feelings of gratitude for everything and everyone good in your life is also a day well-spent. Even though it may be a corny tradition, I love it when we go around the table and each person says at least one thing for which they are grateful.

While the Thanksgiving meal in our house has never been a predictable affair, it has always been a democratic one. Menu suggestions are welcome, and over the years we've hit on some good recipes that have been added to the family cookbook. This year, instead of pumpkin or apple pie, I will prepare a cranberry and pumpkin cheesecake with a gingersnap crust. When I first came across this recipe, I was admittedly a bit daunted. The directions seemed complicated, and although I have successfully made cheesecakes in the past, I know when things go wrong, they can go wrong badly. I'm glad to say in this case, my fears were misplaced. After I carefully re-read the recipe a few times, I realized it was far less complicated than I had first thought. What you see in the photo on this page is the final result of my test run, and I can tell you that right now I'm feeling kind of grateful.

Happy Thanksgiving.



Photo by Deborah Bunka

CRANBERRY AND PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE WITH GINGERSNAP CRUST

Serves 10 to 12

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups finely crushed gingersnap cookies**
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**
- 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar, 2/3 cup granulated sugar**
- 1/4 cup water**
- 24 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- 5 large eggs (room temp works best)**
- 2/3 cup sour cream**
- 1 cup cooked, pureed pumpkin, fresh or canned**
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger**

DIRECTIONS

In a bowl, combine the gingersnap crumbs and the melted butter. Mix well. Press the mixture onto the bottom and midway up the sides of a 10-inch springform pan. Cover the outside bottom and sides of the pan with aluminum foil. Refrigerate the crust while preparing the filling. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

In a small, heavy saucepan, combine

the cranberries, the 1/2 cup sugar and the water and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the berries pop and the mixture thickens. Let it cool completely.

In a bowl and using an electric mixer set on medium speed, beat together the cream cheese and the 2/3 cup sugar until smooth. Add the eggs and sour cream and continue to beat until completely smooth. Transfer 1 cup of the mixture to a blender and set aside. Beat the pumpkin and ginger into the remaining batter until fully incorporated. Pour into the prepared crust. Add the cooled cranberries to the blender and puree until smooth. Pour this mixture over the pumpkin batter. Using a butter knife, swirl the cranberry mixture into the pumpkin batter.

Bake in the oven for approximately 1 hour, or until the filling is set around the edges. The center will still look jiggly. Turn off the oven, prop the door open and let the cheesecake cool down (in the oven) for 2 hours. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely. Refrigerate overnight before serving.

Keep your holiday dinner high in flavor, low in fat

By AMY CLARK, L.D. R.D

Thanksgiving is a seasonal feast filled with favorite family foods. Feasting may add a whopping 2,000 to 4,500 calories to your daily intake. For an average-sized person, who engages in moderate activity and consumes between 1,600 and 2,200 calories per day to maintain weight, the calories from one feast meal, by any standards, constitute a hefty intake. Research suggests that Americans probably gain about a pound during the winter holiday season, but an accumulation of weight over the years may contribute to obesity and other health problems later in life. This finding runs contrary to the popular belief that most people gain from five to ten pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

Enhance the flavor and nutrition, yet decrease the fat and calories of your delectable



AMY CLARK

HONEY-ORANGE SWEET POTATOES

All you need

- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 6 (5-inch) sweet potatoes or yams

All you do

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Combine orange juice, honey, margarine and salt in small saucepan over medium heat. Cook 5 minutes or until margarine is melted. Set aside and keep warm. Wrap potatoes in foil and place on baking sheet. Bake potatoes 35 to 45 minutes. Remove foil and cut slit in top of each potato to open. Serve with orange juice mixture.

Nutrition facts per serving: 192 calories, 34 g carbohydrates, 2 g protein, 6 g fat, 3 g fiber, 116 mg sodium.

table dishes using strategies and food ingredient substitutions such as these:

- Use a salad plate, because less looks like more.

• To monitor your portion sizes, eat from a plate, not the platter or package.

• Serve fresh, high-fiber fruit and vegetables as appetizers. Fiber creates a feeling of fullness and helps us eat a certain volume of foods rather than a certain amount of calories.

• Baste the bird with fat-free broth or remove the solidified fat before using regular broth.

• Enjoy the turkey without the skin. Almost half the fat resides in the skin.

• Use nonfat milk, water or chicken broth and skip the butter as you mash potatoes.

• Prepare sweet potatoes with little or no marshmallow cream, butter or brown sugar. Or bake sweet potatoes with diced apples and raisins, using butter spray for flavor.

• Make your own cranberry relish or "salsa" instead of serving the high-sugar variety.

• Reduce calories in pumpkin pie by using nonfat evaporated milk instead of cream in your recipe. Pumpkin pie typically has fewer calories than pecan and fruit pies.

This information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult a medical professional for individual advice.

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Dr. James Buck

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Facets calendar | NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

MONDAY, NOV. 1

ISU Flute Ensemble — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Martha Ellen Tye Recital Hall in the Music Building. Cost is free.

TUESDAY, NOV. 2

Tuesday Tea — Come to the Farmhouse Museum on ISU central campus to enjoy tea and conversation. Tea begins at noon. Cost is free.

THURSDAY, NOV. 4

Trans-Siberian Orchestra — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines. Tickets are \$27 to \$58.50.

Invisible Children: Stories of War — Film and discussion with Asimwe Proscovia of Uganda. Begins at 7 p.m. in the Gallery of the Memorial Union. Cost is free.

FRIDAY, NOV. 5

ISU Theatre presents **"The Arabian Nights"** — The stories of Scheherazade feature genies, thieves and kings and raise storytelling to a new level of enchantment. Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Fisher Theater in Ames. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors and \$8 for students.

SATURDAY, NOV. 6

ISU Theatre presents **"The Arabian Nights"** — Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at Fisher Theater in Ames. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors and \$8 for students.

SUNDAY, NOV. 7

ISU Theatre presents **"The Arabian Nights"** — Show begins at 2 p.m. at Fisher Theater in Ames. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors and \$8 for students.

TUESDAY, NOV. 9

Furthur — Phil Lesh and Bob Weir, featuring Jeff Chimenti, John Kadlecik, Joe Russo, Sunshine Becker and Jeff Pehrson. Show begins at 7:30 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Tickets are \$39.50, \$49.50 and \$50.50.

THURSDAY, NOV. 11

"Recycled Art for the Garden" — Lecture presented by sculptor John Brommel. Begins at noon at Reiman Gardens. Free for CoHorts' members, price of admission for general public.

SUNDAY, NOV. 14

Christmas Open House — Find great gifts for

the whole family at the Reiman Gardens Gift Shop.

TUESDAY, NOV. 16

"Monochromatic Arrangements" — Floral Design Series: Session A workshop begins at 1 p.m. at Reiman Gardens. Cost is \$26 for CoHorts' members, \$32.50 for the general public.

"Monochromatic Arrangements" — Floral Design Series: Session B workshop begins at 7 p.m. at Reiman Gardens. Cost is \$26 for CoHorts' members, \$32.50 for the general public.

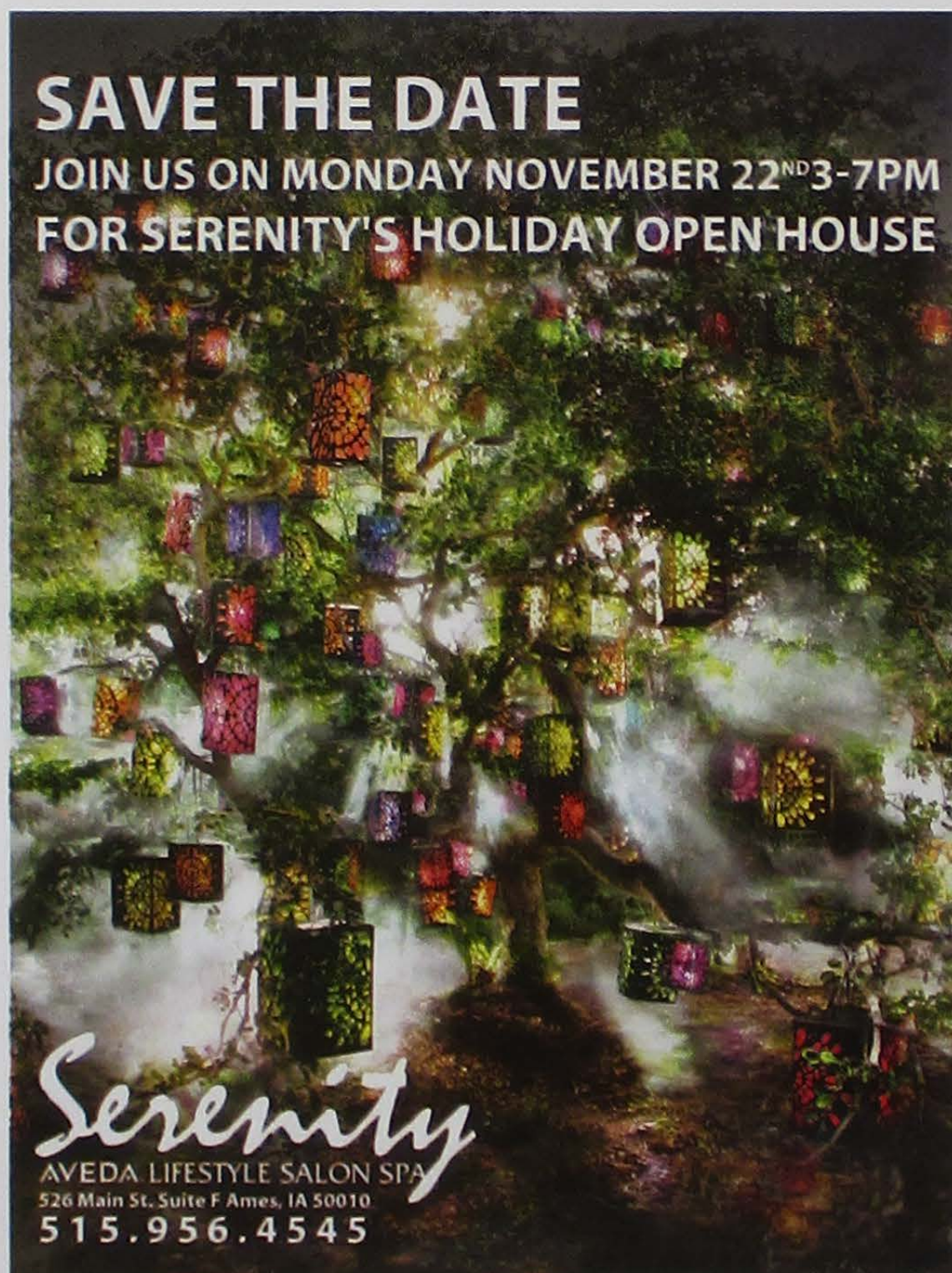
SUNDAY, NOV. 21

Lori Line & Her Fab Five — The holiday tradition continues with America's favorite female pianist. Show begins at 3 p.m. at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Tickets are \$48 for adults and \$25 for children.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 17

The Art of Developing Followership — presented by Anne Mulcahy. Lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Sun Room of the Memorial Union. Cost is free.

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faceted woman | KATIE CARMER

Name: Katie Carmer

Age: 32

Position: Realtor, Hunziker and Associates

Family: Husband, Rick; dog Pinot; and cat Smoky

What would you do with \$1,000 to spend on yourself?

Take a long weekend trip with Rick.

Your favorite meal:

Rick's turkey meatloaf with a side of noodles and a touch of browned butter; I think I could eat this meal every day.

Craziest fashion you ever wore:

Tight-rolled jeans and crimped hair; not sure what we were thinking.

I never leave home without:

My cell phone, of course.

Your favorite motto:

Be true to yourself.

What makes you laugh?

My 16-month-old niece, Lainey. It's nearly impossible to be around her and not break into a smile or laughter. She's an amazing little spirit.

What have you accomplished that has made you proud?

Earning my college degree, I think that is one of the best decisions I ever made for my future.

Best tip to look and feel great:

Exercise. It is great for stress relief and helps me stay mentally focused. Good health is the greatest asset you will ever have.



Contributed photo

Katie Carmer and her husband, Rick Carmer.

If you knew then what you know now, what would you have done differently?

Listen to my mom more often. Mothers really do know what they are talking about. Also, I would try to learn at an earlier age that certain things in life are always going to be out of your control, so don't stress over what you cannot control or change. There are so many times where things do happen for a reason in the end.

My simplest pleasure:

Spending time with Rick, whether we are traveling or just sitting at home on our deck, I always appreciate our time together. He is my best friend and confidant.

When I am an old lady:

I hope I look back on my life and see positive impacts that I have made on other peoples' lives and feel no regrets.

I am thankful for:

My family and all the friends I have around me; I've been truly

blessed to have so many loving and supportive people in my life.

What financial advice would you give other women?

Make sure you know where your money is going; keep close track of your finances. Educate yourself on investments and make sure you have the means to support yourself. Don't be scared to take control of your financial future; no one will ever take better care of your money than you.



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hue & cry | WHAT I AM THANKFUL FOR

(Hue and cry: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.)

By MARY HALSTRUM

Facets Editor

As Thanksgiving approaches and we make plans to spend time with family and friends, I am reminded of what I am most thankful for in life. My family, friends and good health top the list, of course, but I think what I'm most thankful for are those little moments within everyday life that are so blissful and wonderful, such as jumping in a pile of leaves on a beautiful fall day with my daughters, or playing tag with them in the yard with me acting as the monster, or letting them win at Candyland, or listening to them jabber on about what they did at school that day. These are the experiences I am most grateful for, as all of them weaved together make up the fabric of my family's life.

I'm also thankful for the times when old-fashioned fun beats out modern technology, which seems



MARY HALSTRUM

to have infiltrated every aspect of our lives. From cell phones to satellite TV to iPods to hand-held video game consoles, there's almost no escaping it. However, I've found that my daughters, if given the choice between playing with some tech-savvy gadget or going outside to play tag, will ALWAYS pick tag. It's not even close. That's something to be thankful for right there.

Another thing I'm thankful for is my husband being such a great cook, because if our menu options were left up to me, my family would be eating minute rice and

frozen pizza every night. I am a pro at grocery shopping but not so much in the kitchen. But he's amazing in that he can whip up something that tastes like it was ordered off a menu at a top-notch restaurant.

I'm also thankful for my best friend, Keri. We met on the first day of seventh grade and have been as close as peanut butter and jelly ever since. There's something to be said for a relationship that no amount of time or distance can ruin. Whether I talked to her yesterday, or two months ago, it feels like it was 10 minutes ago. I hope my daughters are lucky enough to find that one friend who will always be there for them. Keri may not be my sister by blood, but she is in every other way that matters.

I'm also thankful for the wisdom of those older than me. Even though I recently celebrated my 42nd birthday, I have so much more to learn in life about so

many things such as raising unspoiled children, having a successful marriage, saving for retirement, making a house a home, etc. Seeking out advice from my parents, in-laws and older friends is something I do on a regular basis, because if these people have lived longer than I have, they probably have done something right along the way, and I can learn from them.

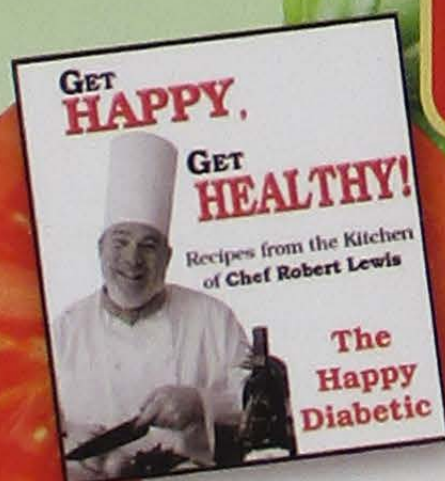
With Election Day coming up Nov. 2, I am also thankful for living in a country where I have the right to exercise my vote. This is something that should never be taken for granted. If you aren't already registered to vote, there's still time.

So even though this year has been a challenging one for my family, we've weathered the storm and things are definitely looking up, which is yet another reason to be thankful.

Here's hoping you and your family have a joyful and stress-free Thanksgiving.

The Happy Diabetic

This Year's Featured Speaker at the
GEORGE HEGSTROM ANNUAL DIABETES SYMPOSIUM



Saturday, November 13, 8 a.m.-Noon

Bessie Myers Auditorium at Mary Greeley Medical Center

Motivated by his type 2 diabetes diagnosis, Chef Robert Lewis was determined to create easy, great tasting dishes that could also improve his health. Do not miss an interactive food demonstration and educational opportunities that the symposium brings. The program features Chef Robert Lewis along with several qualified medical professionals.

There is no charge to attend but pre-registration is required!

To register, call 515-956-2880 or visit www.mgmc.org.

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No matter what your situation is The Ames Contracting Team can help...

Liz Beck's 90 year-old home has had water in its basement for most of the thirty-seven years she has lived there – but not this year. Despite record flooding throughout Ames, Beck's basement remained bone dry all summer long, thanks to the expert work of Ames Contracting Team.

Beck had known for years that her basement was a problem but when she noticed water coming in between foundation tiles last winter, she knew it was time to address the issue. "I called Geisinger and they put together a team who came in and redid my basement, the entire perimeter and put in an internal sump pump," she recalled.

The team Geisinger assembled impressed Beck. "Every single one of them showed up when they said they would show up and did what they said they would do," she said.

The work began with Bob Bauer who did the channeling for the sump pump. Ames Trenching and Excavating and Benjamin Franklin Plumbing teamed to complete the work necessary to install the sump pump. "The sump pump is so silent I'm not even sure it's working," she said.

Geisinger Construction took care of making the repairs to the foundation. "The team that did this entire project was phenomenal," Beck praised. "It was clear when people were coming and clear how long things would take. It was minimal inconvenience," she paused and began again. "It was no inconvenience, none at all."

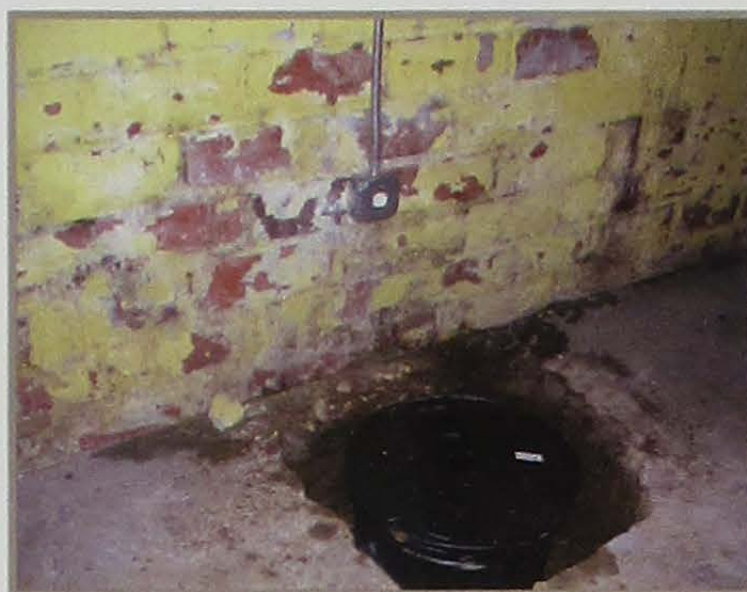
Beck made the decision to call in ACT at precisely the right time. She was in Rhode Island when reports of the flooding back home reached her. "I kept calling my house-sitter to ask if it was dry." The answer never varied. The basement took on not so much as a drop of water. "This was the test. If it hadn't worked I would have under-

stood."

To assure she is not dreaming, Beck continues to visit her basement regularly and enjoy the dry walls and floor she finds there. "The basement was never beautiful before. There were ugly water marks everywhere," she recalled. "When I go down there now, as someone who has lived in the same house for thirty-seven years, its stunning. I can't believe my good fortune."

"It's the best thing I've done in this house in thirty-seven years."

Before



After



Before



After



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